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OVERWORK AND UNDERWORK.

ONE of the many Associations working for good in the metropolis is the National Health Society, which has been some years in existence, and whose object, by means of popular lectures, is to diffuse well-established facts connected with sanitary knowledge. Addressing itself especially to families and households, with a view to the prevention of disease and preservation of health, it has, we understand, been of material service in disseminating useful information among various classes of the community. The principal lecturers are medical men; but the number of non-professionals is by no means inconsiderable. Some of the lectures are, by the courtesy of families connected with the Society, delivered in Drawing-rooms to fashionable audiences; while in other cases the lectures are addressed to bodies of artisans, on subjects of professional importance. For example, we see that the Society proposes to organise a series of lectures and demonstrations to working-plumbers, a class of men on whose handicraft not a little of the health-comfort of households now depends. Desirous to promote the objects of the Society, which in some respects are what we have long been labouring at, we offer the following specimen of one of the more interesting lectures, slightly abridged. It is by Dr Samuel Wilks, on *Overwork and Underwork*, and has been obligingly handed to us for general circulation.

Dr Wilks begins by speaking of the human body as a machine, some parts of which go on continuously, while others are at times at rest; and this period of rest and activity is intimately associated with darkness and light as the earth makes its diurnal revolution on its axis.

'If we take a working man or mechanic, and allow him sufficient time for his meals and for sleep, his body can produce enough force to keep him employed for the remainder of the twenty-four hours. There are many instances where this has been done, so that when it is asked whether a man can work the whole day, the answer is,

assuredly he can; but this always implies that he is allowed time for his meals, and that he has so many hours for sleep. It is idle to ask if a man can work the whole twenty-four hours for an indefinite time, since Nature has made us in such a way as to necessitate a period of rest. If this is allowed, then we may safely assert that he can work the whole of the day. Health is perfectly compatible with this idea, if the day be regarded in its true physiological sense. It would seem to you a self-evident fact that the work got out of a steam-engine must be proportioned to the supply of fuel; and a similar law prevails in the animal machine; or in general terms, as the best work can be got out of a machine when it is well taken care of, so in the same way the most work can be got from the men or women who best take care of themselves. This, you say, is a self-evident proposition; and yet it is one which half the world disregards. If you keep in mind that your body is a furnace, having a temperature of nearly a hundred degrees, whilst perhaps the surrounding air is only sixty degrees, you can imagine the amount of combustion which is going on within us: the body is a furnace in which the food undergoes chemical changes, and in which the tissues are burning, so that it may happen, as I witnessed in a consumptive patient the other day, that the animal heat may reach a hundred and thirty degrees.

'As motion is a form of energy taking the place of heat, so all these chemical changes in the body produce movement as well as warmth. For instance, if you have to carry your body up a mountain, which is the same thing as walking up, a very great amount of chemical action must have taken place in the body to produce the necessary power, and you know when you arrive at the top how very ready you feel to replenish the system. Now, if this same amount of chemical change had produced heat instead of motion, you would be lying on a sick-bed, utterly prostrate, and consumed by your own fires. That is one great difference between health and disease. Now we know pretty well what amount of food is

necessary, and what its nature must be in order to supply the furnace of the body, so as to obtain from it the full amount of heat and motion; and it seems a self-evident fact that in order to obtain the most effect from this or any other machine, its requirements must be first attended to. Yet remarkably enough, this first law of Nature is absolutely unheeded. For example, I lately had a young curate under my care, who was much devoted to his work in a poor suburb of London, but who, getting overdone and overworked, came to me for advice. I sympathised with him in his desire to use all efforts for the benefit of the poor, but unlike him I regarded his body as the necessary instrument to perform his object; he had some vague notions about energy, will, religion, and other metaphysical principles which could aid him; and therefore it was almost a revelation to him to be told that all of his forces came out of his body, and if he wished to strengthen or multiply these, he must not ignore the laws of Nature, but rather make a study of his bodily organism. By making this one of his objects of life, he would find that he would get much more work out of himself than heretofore. He took my advice; and called on me some weeks afterwards to report himself well and equal to all his duties. He had desisted from sacrificing his meals and sleep time to his avocations; but on the other hand made a religious duty of thinking of them, and found himself doing more and better work than before.

'One of the hardest-working men in my profession, on being asked how he could get through all his daily toil, answered, by first having regard to health and physical requirements.

'A lady of good mental powers, engaged much in school-teaching and home missionary work, became at length so devoted to what she considered to be the great aim of her life, that she began to deprive herself of some of her ordinary meals, and often to debar herself from her customary food, that she might have more for the poor people around her. Never was there a more high-minded devotion, or greater sacrifice, combined in so great a folly. I apprehended that she never let so low a thought cross her mind that she was a mechanical or chemical machine; she consequently fell into a wretched state of health, wasted away to a skeleton, and became so feeble, that when I saw her she could not walk from her sitting-room to her bed-room, and at last fell a victim to her ignorance and to her disrespect of the first laws of physiology.

'In minor degrees we see every day that work cannot be done with an impaired bodily organisation; this is self-evident; but it is not so clear when it arises from insufficient or improper nutriment. I see a very large number of persons who suffer from nerve-depression, and I find their mode of life is quite sufficient to account for it, being one altogether incompatible with health. When, therefore, we discuss the question of the amount of

work which a person can do, the very first and obvious condition is, that the machine is kept in order; and yet this prime necessity is often overlooked in the calculation.

'The physical work or muscular exercise is that in which the labourer is solely engaged, and we might therefore ask ourselves in the first place, can this be wholly replaced by mental work? This can only be answered by appealing to the result of experience; and in this respect, I think it may be said that although there have been some very remarkable instances of persons who have taken no bodily exercise whatever for several years, and during this time accomplished much literary and other mental work, yet at last they have broken down from the want of it. I think we must admit the necessity of bodily exercise for all, and therefore the question to be solved is the amount of that exercise. Now, every-day observation is sufficient to shew that the requirements vary with different people; so that we are forced to explain this difference on the principle that use is second nature, and maintain that the necessity for much exercise has been artificially acquired; and, on the other hand, that those who have never accustomed themselves to it, do not require it. Some persons find it necessary to take a measured walk every day; others a ride on horseback, or perhaps on a bicycle; others an occasional run with the hounds, or a day's shooting; whilst some find their walk to and from business sufficient for them. Some make an occupation in order to exercise their muscles, and take to gardening or cutting down trees; or they keep a lathe in the house, and supply all their neighbours with handles of drawers made of every wood in the known world. There seems to be a real necessity for some employment of the body for those who have not the opportunity of out-of-door exercise. Some will walk up and down their garden, or pace round and round their room, like those unhappy beasts in the Zoological Gardens who circulate round their dens, giving now and then a jump over a bar in order to work off their superfluous energies; or as the errand-boys do in the street, put down their goods to fight with other boys, or not happily meeting with an antagonist, get rid of their forces by jumping over all the posts on their road.

'At school or college, the various games have become a part of the constituted curriculum of duty, and every lad or young man rows, plays at football, or cricket. Young ladies also have their lawn tennis, and are ever ready for a dance. During a frosty winter, their enthusiasm for exercise on the ice often surpasses due bounds; but then nothing can tell more in favour of the pursuit than the joyous exhilaration of the young lady as she drives against the cool bracing air.

'We, however, get a step further in our problem, and ask if we add so much time for exercise to that already allotted to sleep and meals, may we occupy the remainder in mental labour? I should

say assuredly we can. We have only to look around amongst our friends and take a glance at public men, to see that they waste not a moment. The whole of their time is occupied, and this month after month.

‘Having determined these broad principles, another question arises, which is one of greater practical issue in every-day life, and it is this. Supposing the whole of our time—that is, the time fixed by physiological consideration—can be occupied by mental work, can it be profitably or even possibly employed in one kind of labour or intellectual pursuit, or must these be varied? This can only be answered by appealing to experience; and I think all will agree in the answer that the mind cannot be occupied on one subject alone with impunity; that in order to allow full occupation for the brain during the whole of the working hours, many of the faculties must be employed; not only is this a necessity, but it is advantageous, by invigorating the mind itself. Every one should therefore have more than one object or pursuit in life. A professional man might be wholly devoted to his pursuits; because, after the monotonous and bread-earning toil of the day, he could direct his thoughts towards the scientific or philosophical side of his calling; but even for these, be he parson, lawyer, or doctor, it is better for him to spend a part of his time in an occupation quite foreign to his daily allotted task. But with the business man, or with him who is at his ledger all day, the case is far different; and I believe a second occupation is an absolute necessity, otherwise some small and limited faculty of the mind is put on the stretch for hours daily, and at last breaks down under the pressure put upon it.

‘Lord Palmerston was considered a marvel for work, but the work was much varied. Lord Brougham’s brain was a mine of wealth, but it could only become thus by legal pursuits being changed ever and anon for literary or scientific ones. A late judge, who only retired from the bench at a very advanced age, was accustomed to recreate himself after leaving his court, by working out mathematical problems. This was not additional labour, but a mode of giving rest to wearied portions of the brain. Need I mention one of our greatest living statesmen, than whom no better example can be afforded of human capabilities—he loses no single moment of his time, and can pass from politics to theology or classical literature as he will; but in order to accomplish this, he has found it necessary to use some muscular exercise, and if ordinary information can be relied upon, he sleeps well and sound. A case proving that after the physiological laws have been obeyed as to meals, sleep, and exercise, the whole of the remaining time may be occupied; and shewing also that in order to produce a vigorous mind, a number and variety of subjects must be brought under contemplation.

‘A similar law of Nature prevails with respect to other organs besides the brain; as, for example, the muscles. A working-man—say a carpenter—may be employed for several hours in manual exertion of various kinds with impunity; but no one can employ a certain set of muscles alone for any length of time without fatigue. Let any one try and keep his body or his arm in a fixed position for only a few minutes, and he will soon discover

that it is attended with the utmost weariness. Artisans who use some special muscles often suffer from their complete paralysis, as the hammermen at Sheffield or the telegraph clerks; and in the same manner, those who sit several hours a day writing, become the subject of what we call writer’s cramp or palsy, just as dancer’s cramp is a spasm affecting the muscles of the leg. Out of all this comes the practical issue, and which I find most important to inculcate, that not only is the occupation of all the faculties, or a number of them, less fatiguing than the employment of one only, as is the use of the whole arm rather than a particular set of muscles, but that the mode of giving rest to one faculty is by the employment of others.

‘For instance, a man occupied in business, or in speculation in the City, becomes worried—his health fails, appetite impaired, and his nights are sleepless; he is recommended rest. He has not resolution to take a journey; but goes home, occupies his time in wandering about his house and garden, with his mind never off his affairs—is constantly talking of them to his wife, and goes to bed with his ledgers on his brain. This man is worse off than when at his office, for then he was doing something to distract his mind; but now he has the opportunity to dwell on his affairs morning, noon, and night. The only way to get him out of the rut and break his train of thought, is to surround him with new circumstances, which may excite in him novel thoughts and fresh ideas; and so by the process of exclusion the old worries are thrust out.’

The lecturer next insists on the necessity for sleep at the proper times, in order to give repose to the brain, and then proceeds: ‘It is possible, after allowing time for meals and sleep, to fill up the remainder with manual work. If the work be mental, then a small portion of time must be given to exercise or physical labour, and the remainder of the day may be wholly occupied. Of course, as a matter of fact this is not done, nor is it advisable, since a portion of time should be given to amusement or recreation, as to the enjoyment of music or the stage. It is not true, as many seem to think, that it is not possible to fill in all the hours with work, as this would soon wear out the machine, and that therefore several hours of absolute rest are required. Now this is a very prevalent error, and in my profession I do not pass a day without having to combat this mistaken view. What I daily witness, is the fact that young persons suffer from want of occupation. This does not so often occur in the male sex to the same lamentable extent as amongst young women; but occasionally I get confirmed hypochondriacs amongst men, and I then very frequently find they have no occupation, and have fallen a prey to morbid feelings which their idleness has induced. A friend of my own in the medical profession, and working hard in general practice, enjoyed good health until a very rich aunt left him a large fortune. He threw up his business, and then his miseries commenced: after visiting friends and enjoying all the ordinary pleasures of life, he at length became weary of them; he sank into a listless state, and of course his health suffered; he then began to think he had this disease and the other, until he became a prey to a thousand fancied ailments; he became feeble both in body

and mind, a confirmed hypochondriac, and is at the present time slowly dying. The bodily machinery is like all machines of human device—it must be worked to be kept in order, for, like them, if left at rest, it will much sooner rust out than wear out. One of the firm of Broadwood lately said to me: You ought to have your piano played upon daily, for nothing is so detrimental to an instrument as to let it lie idle. The numerous joints must be kept in movement if you wish it ever ready for use. The case of my friend is an extreme one; but lesser degrees of it I constantly meet with, and, as I just now said, daily in women. I see families containing several daughters who literally do nothing. Just think of going to bed to-night, and to know the morrow is coming, with no object before you to fill the day, much less for the whole year to come! When I consider the bodily organism with its moral and spiritual aspirations, and think of the numbers of women who have no object to bestow these upon, I do not wonder at all the hysterical and nervous vagaries which I have to treat.

We reserve the remainder of the lecture for a second article.

A LIFE'S ATONEMENT.

CHAPTER XXXII.—AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

He poured forth an impetuous torrent of self-accusation.

'To be well in chambers,' Thackeray writes in that novel of his which has always been my favourite, 'is melancholy and lonely and selfish enough; but to be ill in chambers—to pass nights of pain and watchfulness—to long for the morning and the laundress—to serve yourself your own medicine by your own watch—to have no other companion for long hours but your own sickening fancies and fevered thoughts: no kind hand to give you drink if you are thirsty, or to smooth the hot pillow that crumples under you—this indeed is a fate so dismal and tragic, that we shall not enlarge upon its horrors, and shall only heartily pity those bachelors in the Temple who brave it every day.' All this I suffered; and with it, in such lucid moments as the fever afforded me, I made myself worse by the rebellion in which I raged against my Uncle Ben's suspicion. I learned afterwards that three days after my seizure, Gregory, who had paid several visits to my rooms, and had succeeded in making no one hear his summons at the door, waylaid the laundress in his anxiety about me; and finding the state I was in, rushed boldly after Dr Brand, and told him not only the fact of my illness, but the reason of it. The good Doctor attended me, and sent a practised nurse, who superseded the laundress; and having discovered her in a state of intoxication, with a bottle of my brandy on the table before her, took upon herself to discharge that faithless functionary. The laundress, as I learned afterwards, revenged herself by pitying statements to the other men whose chambers she attended, as to the sorrow she felt at seeing such a nice young gentleman take to drink so early.

The Doctor's medicine and the nurse's tending brought me round; and for some days after the fever had left me, I lay quite tranquil and at rest; but my after-recovery was made slow by the misery of mind which I endured. I came out

of my sick-room aged and altered. The Holborn lawyer had no comfort for me when I called upon him, though his manner was distinctly sympathetic and gentle. He offered to pay me at any time the first portion of the allowance my uncle had proposed to make me; but I refused it sullenly, and told him that until Mr Hartley had withdrawn his accusation, I would hold no dealings with him, and would nevermore accept a farthing at his hands.

'How do you propose to live?' Mr Bilton asked me. 'You have no profession as yet.'

'I do not know,' I answered, with a bitter and resentful sense of the injustice which had been done me. 'No man with a pair of hands need starve.' He shook his head at that with a pitying smile, which in the soreness of my heart, I received almost as if it had been a blow.

'When you change your mind,' he answered, 'you can come to me.'

'My mind will not change on that matter,' I responded. 'Let me know if you learn anything from the police.'

He promised me that; and I left him, and went back to my rooms, to survey the prospect which spread itself before me. It looked very barren; and I was groaning in spirit over it, and was lashing myself into a great state of rage against Uncle Ben, as the author of my misery, when Gregory came in.

'Jack,' he said with a friendly hand upon my shoulder, 'what do you propose to do?'

'I don't know,' I answered fretfully. 'I think I shall sell off the things, send the proceeds to Bilton, for my uncle, and enlist.'—He kept his hand upon my shoulder whilst I spoke, and gave me a little pull at the last word, which indicated a decided negative.—'What else can I do?' I asked him gloomily.

'It is quite clear,' said Gregory, 'that you can't receive any more money from your uncle until this cloud between you disappears.'

'I will never take another penny from him,' I cried hotly. 'And if any chance present itself, I will pay back every farthing he has spent upon me, though I have to pay it to his grandchildren.'

'You can't do that on a shilling a day, you goose,' said Gregory, with his hand still upon my shoulder. 'Do you know what I do for a living?'

'I didn't know,' I answered, 'that you did anything. I thought your father made you an allowance.'

'My father's money,' he said gravely, 'has been sunk in mines, and swallowed in the Gulf of Mexico, and strewn broadcast over the tracts of Patagonia, and invested in the great vineyard speculation in Smith's Sound, and dissipated generally on hopeful experiments which bade fair to yield a rich profit to—the promoters. I suppose the promoters have profited by them; but his children have been keeping him these past two years, and he hasn't one financial feather left to fly with. I don't blame him,' said Gregory, making a curious grimace. 'He meant well. He never cared for money, or understood it; but he thought it would be nice to leave us all millionaires, and in the attempt to do it he ruined himself. That's all. Now, how do you think I live?'

'How do you live?'

'By teaching my grandmother the art and mystery of egg-sucking,' he answered. 'I am a public instructor. I have this morning completed an article on "Sugar" for the new Encyclopædia. I did one on "Soap" last week. I am the author of that instructive volume *The World's Workshops*. I write for reviews, magazines, newspapers. A farce of mine will be played next week at the Olympic. You must come and see it. I am writing a novel for a firm in Manchester who will publish it simultaneously in thirteen provincial weekly journals. "The pen is mightier than the sword," as the Dandy of Literature most truly saith. You can only earn a shilling a day with the sabre. I make six hundred a year with a quill, and hope to make more in time. All is fish that comes to my net. I shall be in parliament next session—not as a member, but as a salaried censor of the House, a leader-writer to a daily journal. I have been at this work now for four years, and I am doing well at it. Now this brings me to my question again. You must earn a living somehow, and you must do it like a gentleman. Why not try my plan?'

I flushed at the suggestion. Of all the fairy palaces I had built in fancy for myself to live in—and they had been many in my hopeful days—none had seemed so well worth living for as that in which Hope enshrined certain literary works of mine, as yet unwritten.

'But who would pay for any work that I could do?' I asked. 'I am untried. I—I—think'—

'O yes,' cried Gregory, 'you think! I know you think. Put your thoughts on paper. Jack, I can give you a chance. This is a secret, mind you, and it must be kept.' I nodded 'Of course;' and he went on: 'Lord Chesterwood is aiming at a place in the ministry, and he is establishing a daily journal. Stone will be editor. He leaves the *Daily Mail* on purpose to rule over us. I am parliamentary leader-writer. You shall be "Our Special Commissioner," if you will, and you shall hit on a theme at once and write a series of articles. Let me give you a hint. Suppose you take the London Slums, which have been "done" again and again, and will be "done" again and again, so long as they and newspaper writers live side by side. Attempt no fine writing. Be as accurate, as uncompromising as a photograph. Say all you see. Make your sentences short and curt, and let each sentence petrify a fact. Keep your eyes open, and set down everything. Don't be afraid of being commonplace or vulgar, but be rigidly and strictly true. Imagine nothing. Use no too-powerful adjectives. There is nothing simpler than the style I mean, and nothing that takes better with the public, which is made up of matter-of-fact people for the most part, and doesn't care for high-falutin'.

I asked with some misgiving if Gregory had influence enough to secure this work for me.

'Yes,' he answered; 'if you only do these first things decently. Set about them at once. We shall be ready to begin in a month, and you must start with us. I have named you to Stone already—promising, brilliant young fellow, did well at college, nephew of Hartley, great millionaire, anxious to join literary guild, win his spurs, that sort of thing.'

'Why did you speak of my uncle?' I asked gloomily.

'He is your uncle, isn't he?' said Gregory. 'Very well; I said he was.'

'He must know,' I said, 'that my uncle and I are parted, and that I have no hopes from him. I will not sail under false colours.'

'You Quixotic young idiot,' said Gregory with rough amity; 'don't talk rubbish. What's Hecuba to him—meaning your estimable uncle—or he to Hecuba? You set to work on your articles. Think of a title, crisp, alliterative if possible, and accurately descriptive. Let me see the first, and I'll tell you if it'll do. You'll find me a cruel critic; so take care.'

I had at that time thirty pounds in hand, and half of that had to go in payment of a quarter's rental for my chambers; but I looked forward with new hope now, and under Æsop's directions, I went to work at once, to make this small sum a little larger. The following night saw me in Whitechapel, in company with an Inspector and a Sergeant of Police; and in a week I was fully acquainted with the locale of the slums, and knew something of their characteristics. Every night when I came home, I wrote the story of the evening's adventures in complete detail; and every morning after, I trimmed and polished with zealous care. Then I gave a week to the complete rewriting of the series, and began to regard it as a masterpiece of literary effort. My note to Gregory in which I announced that they were ready for inspection was written modestly enough; but I felt within myself that the articles would stagger him more than a little. When he came to read them, I had arrived at the belief that they were filled with perhaps the vilest trash which had ever been put upon paper; and when he took them away with the simple statement that he thought they would do, I felt immensely relieved.

By-and-by there came to me by post a bundle of damp strips of paper in which the articles appeared in type; and though I knew them by heart already, I read them through and through with an ever-increasing pride and joy, and resolved that they would take the town by storm. At last the paper appeared; and on the placard of contents I with my own eyes beheld in the public streets the printed title of my series. The Strand waltzed with me. I paid a penny for a copy of the new journal, and wondered if the boy who served me knew that there was an article of mine in it, and what he would think if he did know it. I opened and folded back the paper, and read the article anew as I walked to my chambers. If all the hurrying crowds that went between Charing Cross and Clement's Dames had formed in rows to see me pass, and had cheered me like a Royal Procession on a gala-day, I could not have felt prouder. Every placard on the walls from which the words my pen had written looked upon me, was a tribute to me; and when at last a long file of sandwich-men came along the street, each bearing at back and front an invitation to the general public to purchase the new journal and to read my articles, specially mentioned in large type, I was almost beside myself, and was glad to walk into the quiet of the Inn, lest my emotion should be observed. The upshot of the business was that I received a cheque for the series, and that I was engaged at a settled weekly salary as a

descriptive writer on the new daily journal. The salary I received opened no visions of El Dorado to my gaze; but it was enough to live on quietly. I dropped out of my place in the hospital; and nobody there, except Dr Brand, knew why. But the crowd of friends who had sought the society of the acknowledged nephew of the great millionaire, dropped off when the great millionaire's supply had ceased to gild me; and I knew on whose help and friendship I could rely.

In all the devious ways in which my life has been guided, I can but recognise a Master Hand. I have been moved inexorably here and there, against my will, apart from my will. The plan of my life has no more been mine than the words written by my pen this moment are dictated by it. And now in the halting-place of life at which I tell this story, I can see the plan which my unwilling movements here and there have traced, and I know that I was guided to a settled end.

My articles did not take the town by storm; but they attracted at least the notice of the Editor, who made up his mind from them that the low life of London was my especial track. He kept me on it. He found for me series after series, until at last he set me upon the great religious revival, which at that time was agitating the lower classes of London; and I followed the course of this strange wave into such curves and hollows of the human shore as I could reach.

On a certain night, when the rain was falling dismally, I crossed the river afoot, and walked towards a great wooden tabernacle in which the chief services of the revival were held. It was Sunday, and the streets were blank. I remember the look of the flickering gas-lights in the dusk—the grimy perspective of the mean houses as they stretched out towards the dark in dreary monotony of ugliness—the sullen pools of rain in the breaches of the pavement—the chill discomfort of the fretful wind. When I reached the place, I was a little surprised to find that the service had begun; but a glance at the bills upon the wooden walls shewed me that I had mistaken the announced time by half an hour. It mattered little; and I entered, finding even standing-room with difficulty. A man upon the platform was frenzied himself in prayer, and the vast crowd followed his appeals with cries and groans. When the prayer was over, another man gave out a hymn, and some thousands of voices rolled it to the roof. I have heard nothing like that rough singing elsewhere. The hymn over, a third man offered prayer; and then, with first a rustle and a curious swaying in the crowd, and then a dead silence, the congregation settled itself to hear the sermon. A tall and commanding figure clad in black, came forward to the platform's edge. The light was dim, and there was a positive cloud of steam from the damp clothes of the crowd; but I seemed to know the poise of that golden head, and the slow imperious motion of the arm by which the preacher seemed to command silence. And with the first tones of his voice, I knew him. It was Gascoigne. At first, I was so amazed to see him there that I could scarcely find a thought for what he said; but remembering that more than one clergyman of the Church of England had given countenance to this movement, though none, so far as I knew, had spoken from the platform, I composed myself to listen. If such a sermon

as he preached had been written, few men of taste could have approved it. Had it been delivered in a church and to a cultivated audience, its force would have been lost. But Gascoigne, as I knew now, was an orator, and somehow he knew his people, and he swayed the crowd with the passion and the pathos of his words. Every simile was trite. There was nothing beyond the comprehension of the meanest; but everything was dramatic, and instinct with a fire that set even my veins tingling, though I was bent rather on criticism than devotion.

His voice was wonderful to hear. It rang over us like a clarion; it moved us like a wind; it rose to height beyond height of passionate denunciation. It fell to dead silence for a moment, and then its rare music took a softer mood; and in a while it passed to exultation, and rose again majestic, and thrilled and awed and melted the rough souls that heard it. But if I had been amazed before, astonishment transcended itself when the preacher poured forth an impetuous torrent of self-accusation. He, vilest among sinners, he most faithless to the truth, must yet preach, for the hand of God was upon him. So he spoke; and the strange discourse continued with an appeal to the Divine Mercy, which was echoed in sobs and prayers about the place, and closed amidst a storm of tears and cries. I made an effort to struggle through the crowd towards the platform; but the stream was all against me—crawling slowly to the front door; and when I had resigned my effort, and had made a way round the building to the preacher's retiring-room, it was dark and empty. I went home in a condition of uneasy wonder, with a fear about Gascoigne in my thoughts which no reasoning in his favour could altogether stifle.

He had never been a good correspondent; and of late years, our letters, though full of heartiness, were brief and rare on both sides. That had never made a difference in my friendship to him, or indicated any, as I believed, on either side. I had written to him once concerning my Uncle Ben's suspicion of me, and had received a letter of sympathy and indignant protest; but my later letters setting forth my new prospects had not been answered. I began to ask myself if Gascoigne had thrown away his prospects in the Church; but I could resolve on no belief, and was left—as I have said already—in uneasy wonder.

On the following night I went again through the wintry rain to the tabernacle, and reaching the place early, took advantage of my occupation as a journalist, and secured a seat in front. Gascoigne did not appear; but I learned on inquiry that he was to preach on Wednesday. I cannot tell by what instinct I did it; but on that night I waived my privilege, and took a place some twenty rows down in the middle of the central division. When the doors were opened for the admission of the populace, men and women stormed into the building headlong and fought for places. The aisles were choked, and the whole place was crammed almost to suffocation. After a long pause, a sudden swaying in the aisles, and a sudden cessation of the coughing sounds which had hitherto filled the building, sent my eyes to the platform, and I saw, amid the half-dozen square-set, white-tied, bullet-headed men who took their places on it, the tall form and the golden hair of my friend. From

where I sat, I could see him clearly. Even his lips were pallid, but his eyes were ablaze with the fire of an intense excitement. After one keen glance, which seemed to take in all the faces in the crowd but mine, he bent his head, and through all the preliminary service his eyes were fixed upon the floor. Once or twice he raised his hand to his forehead, and I could see a little tremor in it, which told clearly how high his nerves were strung. The service over, he arose and gave out his text, and waiting until the rustle of leaves with which many of the congregation confirmed his citation of the words, was ended, he began to speak, at first slowly and with labour, each syllable falling distinct and clear in spite of the agitation which shook him. In a minute that agitation had left him, and he was master of himself, and thenceforth master of the crowd. I watched him intently—my glance was fastened to his face, but he never looked at me until he seemed to approach the end of his discourse. Clean in the middle of a word, some mortal-seeming pain struck him at the very instant when his eyes met mine. His face grew on a sudden deathly in its pallor, and a terrible hush struck over the place. Both his hands went to his heart for a moment, and then he cast out his arms and threw his head backward like a swimmer in heavy waters who gives up the struggle. 'Gascoigne!' A cry tore the air. Was it mine? I scarcely knew whether it were mine or no; but it rang wildly in my ears as I rushed—how I cannot tell—towards the platform. He was down. He had measured his length upon the floor, and mine were the first arms about him. I could do nothing but hold up his head and look round in an imploring agony; but there were steadier hands and better nerves than mine about him. The crowd began to storm the platform, and I can dimly remember that a burly man with a loud commanding voice ordered them to stand aloof and wait. As we bore the limp figure to the retiring-room, one followed busy at the cravat which bound Gascoigne's throat; and when it was loosened, the head rolled back so lifelessly, that I turned sick with horror at the thought that he was dead. He was not dead; but he had swooned, and he had fallen heavily, and his head was injured. When his pale eyelids raised themselves at last, and his ghostly eyes met mine, he turned with a faint moan and a shudder of the limbs, and his eyes closed again. But after a time, he sat up with my arms about him.

'What was it, brother?' one of the busiest of the helpers asked, as Gascoigne looked round with troubled ghostly eyes and faint quick breathing.

'The heart,' he answered, feebly striking his breast with his left hand, 'pierced—by a pain—like a knife.'

Some one had bound a white handkerchief, dipped first in water, about his head, and there were a few drops of blood upon it. His face was touched with blood also, and the water-spots hung upon his lashes like tears.

'Will some one be good enough to call a four-wheeler?' I asked, gathering a little courage. 'You will come home to my chambers?' I said to Gascoigne; and he answered with a tremor which alarmed me anew.

'Yes, I will—come.' Then feebly wandering

round with those ghostly eyes among the troubled and sympathetic faces which surrounded him, he said brokenly: 'It is—the hand—of God.'

'Ay, brother,' said the man who had just spoken. 'Cling to that.'

Gascoigne could only moan in answer. His eyes closed again; and once more I felt a swift shudder run through him as he lay in my arms.

After what seemed to be a long pause, a cab was brought; and Gascoigne, supported on each side, walked down the broken way which ran by the wooden structure. The builders had left it full of hollows and ends of timber, and we went stumbling about in the dark with the sick man between us until we reached the road. There we helped Gascoigne into the vehicle; and I, taking a seat beside him, bade the cabman drive to Clement's Inn. When we reached Waterloo Bridge, and the cab paused whilst I paid the tollman, Gascoigne laid his hand upon my arm, and called me by name. I begged him to rest; and he lay back murmuring to himself, but made no further effort to address me. When we reached the gates, I gave him my arm; and the cabman helping him on the other side, we went slowly to my chambers, and set him in an arm-chair there. When I had dismissed the cabman, I gave Gascoigne a glass of brandy; and the room being chill and dismal-looking, I put a light to the fire, which soon began to burn up cheerfully. I drew off his boots, though he made what seemed a fretful effort to oppose me, and brought him slippers, and he sat sipping his brandy-and-water and gazing at the fire.

'Jack,' he said suddenly in an excited voice, 'I will tell you everything. I will make a clean breast of it; and then what *will* come *may* come.'

I could see a feverish light in his eyes, and I noticed too that his complexion changed rapidly from red to white and back again.

'You shall tell me what you will to-morrow,' I answered; 'but you shall tell me nothing now. You are not fit to talk. You shall sit here quietly, and I will fetch a doctor.'

'No,' he said excitedly; 'I need no doctor. I can tell what ails me without a doctor. There is only one cure in the universe, and I have it in my hands. Listen to me!'

'You shall not hurt yourself by talking now,' I said, beginning to fear that his mind was affected by the excitement of the night and the sudden illness which had attacked him. 'If you will not have a doctor, I shall insist upon your going to bed. Come now; let me help you.'

He submitted, but with a chafing restlessness. He was so weak, and his mood so variable, that when he was at last in bed, and I laid my hand upon his shoulder in bidding him good-night, he broke into hysterical sobs, and I had hard work to calm him. Thinking he would be more likely to sleep if alone, I left him, and sat beside the fire thinking and smoking. I looked in upon him once or twice; and at length finding that his slumbers, at first feverish and broken, had grown settled, I ventured to go to bed myself. I lay awake for a long time, and could hear his regular breathing from the other room; but at last sleep overpowered me.

I awoke in the morning with a sense of trouble, which resolved itself into a remembrance of

Gascoigne's sudden illness. Slipping out of bed, I opened the door of his room noiselessly and looked in. To my surprise, I found that he had left his bed; and I became alarmed when a visit to the sitting-room assured me that he had quitted my chambers.

AMERICAN BOARDING-HOUSES.

BOARDING-HOUSES have long been an essential feature in the social system of our kin across the Atlantic, and are conspicuously so to-day in all the cities of the northern continent from Halifax to Galveston, and indeed wherever the nucleus of a population begins to appear. They are especially well adapted to the peculiar circumstances of the United States, where society is not as yet a very settled element, and where population is subject to fluctuations unknown in countries of less recent origin. Consequently, we find boarding-houses patronised in the States not merely by single persons, and by a class in particular corresponding to the class who in our own country live in lodgings, but also by married couples and families, to an extent which may seem incredible to people with old-country views of what constitutes domestic comfort and seclusion. High rents, difficulty in procuring servants, and other troubles in private housekeeping, are the predominant causes of the success of boarding-houses on a large scale. Sudden movements of trade also produce unsettled habits of life, and so tend to maintain the boarding-house system.

As regards the difficulty with servants, the maid's incapacity to help is sometimes matched by the incompetence of the mistress to manage. Indeed, this is exceedingly likely to be the case if the latter has been brought up in a boarding-house. In such an event, that convenient institution naturally suggests itself as the most ready refuge from housekeeping vexations, and is again resorted to by married people whose efforts to maintain an establishment on their own account have been probably brief, and at any rate abortive.

The condition of things above indicated goes far to account for the prevalence of the boarding-house system in America. It is a system which has no counterpart among ourselves, and which indeed, with our more settled circumstances and steadier-going ways, would be impossible. It is designed, however, to answer all the wants of young and single people, and may even bestow contentment, at least for a season, on such married folk as have found housekeeping a source of constant vexation and discomfort. For a stipulated sum per week, the boarding-house furnishes lodging, three meals a day, and attendance; in fact the arrangement is much the same as in a family hotel. The price paid varies only according to the room accommodation occupied, boarders being all on the same footing as regards meals and attendance. They sit down to meals together; and it is only just to say that the barbarous manners depicted in *Martin Chuzzlewit* would now be looked for in vain, even in such humbler boarding-houses than the renowned establishment of Major Pawkins. In the matter of attendance—which is less even than is given in most hotels—married boarders are no better off than single, both having to employ people specially to do clothes-washing, boot-blackening, and all merely

personal services. Even the lighting of fires, when fires are needed, becomes an extra item of expense; and by these means, as well as by the labour-saving conveniences introduced into city dwellings, the work of domestics is reduced to a minimum. Hot and cold water are found in all the rooms to the very top of these houses; and in winter the heating is supplied by a furnace in the cellar, the warm air from which is admitted into the hall, dining-room, and common parlours, in a regulated current through a grated aperture in the floor of each. This is decidedly not the pleasantest kind of artificial heating, but it is not the least effective, and dispenses with a vast amount of work about grates. It is true, nevertheless, that by such expedients comfort is often ruthlessly sacrificed to convenience.

The cost of living in boarding-houses ranges from strictly economical to profusely extravagant terms, without anything like a corresponding difference in the degree of comfort obtained by these extremes of expenditure. The scale of charges made by an establishment depends mainly on the character of its surroundings without, and its pretensions to style within. Even in the United States style is not despised, and commands quite a fancy price; but it is not very obvious why a boarding-house, where the table-maids are fair and tidy daughters of the soil, cannot pretend to the same degree of that somewhat indefinable quality as one where the guests are waited on by a black man in a black coat and white necktie. In New York, a well-to-do boarder thinks nothing of paying thirty dollars a week for very much the same material comforts as a clerk or shopman can command at an outlay of ten dollars; but the first occupies apartments in Fifth Avenue, while the other remains content with a 'hall-bedroom' or sleeping closet over the lobby in less fashionable Fourth. If bed and board of a plain but comfortable kind in an unobtrusive neighbourhood will content a man and his wife, these they may procure for fifteen dollars a week; but if they desire more than the bare necessities, or if they go to live in some fashionable 'brown-stone-front' in an up-town locality, then they may pay forty, fifty, or even a greater number of dollars. As a rule, middle-class people do not consider it extravagant to pay for board at the rate of from ten to twenty dollars for individuals, twenty to thirty-five dollars for married couples, and for families in proportion—five dollars being about equivalent to one pound sterling. Nor can these rates be deemed exorbitant, seeing that the fare provided in the better class of establishments does not fall very far short of what some boarding-house advertisements promise—namely, 'the best the market affords, with all the luxuries of the season.'

Seasonable luxuries are made a feature on the table, and a regular boarder would think himself defrauded if he did not get shad in April, strawberries in June, buckwheat cakes during winter, and ice all summer. The hour for breakfast is rarely later than eight; luncheon follows at one, and dinner at six. Supper is a meal unknown in boarding-houses; but abstinence from late eating is recompensed by untroubled sleep and a morning appetite which does not disdain porridge. 'The halesome parritch' has been gradually establishing a place on American break-

fast-tables in the past few years. It is eaten in every way which unaccustomed palates can devise to create a relish—with milk and sugar, or with sirup and butter; to begin a meal or to end it; or even as a concomitant to give coherence throughout. But at anyrate, so strong is the belief in 'oatmeal,' that there are now few tables on which it is not a standing dish. Potatoes also are generally served in some form at the morning meal; and as a dainty, strawberries, blackberries, and huckleberries—otherwise called whortleberries, bilberries or blaberries—are presented in summer, and 'griddle-cakes' with maple sirup in winter. Luncheon calls for no remark; while the evening meal scarcely differs from a plain English family dinner, followed by tea and coffee; and here it may be added that the charge of keeping a scanty table is one seldom brought against even the lower-priced establishments.

Boarding-houses are mostly kept by elderly married women and widows, who devote themselves wholly to the business; and when such is the case, the comfort of boarders is likely to be well cared for. On the other hand, when a boarding-house is kept merely as a means of eking out the existence of a family, the family is more likely to obtain support, than the boarder to derive satisfaction from the experiment.

From what has been said, it will be inferred that living in boarding-houses has its conveniences as well as its drawbacks. The system appears objectionable only when it is adopted by families. Young married couples, in the perhaps novel satisfaction afforded by properly cooked food, punctual meals, and relief generally from all care and concern, are ready to believe themselves more than compensated for whatever privileges they may miss, and whatever unwonted restrictions they may discover; but this satisfaction soon wears out. To wives especially, the life becomes irksome and unsatisfying. If they have no children, they are hard beset to find relief from the *ennui* which attacks them in the solitude of their apartments day after day. In the lack of daily household duties, other occupation fails, visiting resources get exhausted, and inveterate novel-reading is apt to become a habit. On the other hand, if they have children, the maternal anxieties which such tender charges awaken under the most favourable circumstances are inconceivably intensified in a boarding-house, which is not a desirable nursery for the rearing of a family. The evidences of this fact are most marked in the United States, where children are thrust while quite young into the company of grown people, and expect to be made much of by strangers, and so become noticeable for their forward manners and love of shewing off. But the boarding-house also imposes restrictions which are felt by husbands as well as wives. Married people soon find that it is impossible to entertain their friends adequately, or to allow personal whims the indulgence which is accorded them in one's own house; and in a general way they experience the fact, that in getting rid of the responsibilities of housekeeping they also surrender to a great extent the privileges of a private establishment. There must needs be in boarding-houses, in the interests of boarders themselves, a certain routine; and although the routine really conflicts very little with the free-and-easy habits engendered by home-

life, yet a boarding-house offers little seclusion and less freedom to any one whose domestic creed is summed up in the pithy axiom that a man's house is his castle.

In short, a boarding-house never can be made a substitute for home. There is therefore a touch of irony in the fact, that the familiar words which are sung wherever the English language is known as a pæan of tender feeling for *Home, Sweet Home*, may truly be said to have issued from a boarding-house; for it was among these institutions of his native land that John Howard Payne had his shifting domicile. Indeed, from the time when he left his father's humble dwelling on Long Island, a boy just entering his teens, till the day of his death in a palace at Tunis—at which place he was for a short time American consul—the writer of *Home, Sweet Home* had no home better than a boarding-house, and knew no sweet more wholesome than the bitter-sweet of unsettled bachelorhood.

RECOLLECTIONS OF AN EQUESTRIAN MANAGER.

BY C. W. MONTAGUE.

EIGHTH PAPER.

ON one occasion I was acting the principal character in an equestrian adaptation of *Richard III.*, in which every arrangement had been made with the view to a grand striking display at the close of the piece, immediately after the encounter between Richard and the Earl of Richmond, in which the monarch is killed. About forty horses and a body of supernumeraries representing the rival armies are massed within the ring, forming an imposing *tableau*. The dead king being then thrown across a horse, the procession winds slowly out. The fight commenced. My fierce and relentless opponent Richmond was represented by Miss Ada Jacobs—once famous as Mazeppa—who, after a long and terrible passage of arms, thrust her cruel blade between my left arm and my side, and I fell to the ground as dead as Julius Cæsar. My eyes were closed; but I heard the tramp of the horses' hoofs as they entered the ring, some of them coming unpleasantly close to my head. I was wishing that they would not come quite so near, when suddenly a foot came down firmly upon my chest. I struggled over and sprang up—I, the dead monarch!—and in doing so, well nigh upset my opponent Richmond, who, to add an unrehearsed feature to our *tableau vivant*, had set her foot upon the breast of her fallen foe! The reader may imagine the burst of laughter which greeted this absurd conclusion of a highly tragic display; nor was the merriment confined to the audience, for the performers joined most heartily in it; though they knew that for a moment it had given me a terrible fright. However, 'Richard was himself again' with a vengeance, though at the wrong part of the performance; and his humble representative had proved anew the truth of the adage, that there is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous.

Had I space at my disposal, I might recount many little incidents to shew how thoroughly the advantage of mutual help is appreciated by actors and equestrians as a class, and to what extent their belief in its efficacy is put into every-day

practice among them. The following example, however, is highly characteristic, and will serve well to illustrate my meaning. One of our apprentices, Miss Polly Abbott, a clever and graceful rider, was the fortunate possessor of a beautiful mass of long, silken, dark-brown tresses, of which she herself was justly proud, and others less favoured were unjustly envious. Miss Abbott's younger sister having obtained an engagement with Hengler's circus, and being on the point of departure, Miss Polly asked and obtained leave of absence in order to see her sister safely off by train. On her reappearance amongst us, she was scarcely recognised. Her long wavy tresses were all gone, and nothing but a very short crop remained.

'What on earth have you been doing to yourself?' I exclaimed.

'Had my hair cut a bit—that's all,' replied Miss Polly with a little laugh.

'So I perceive,' I answered. 'But why have you had it cut so short?'

'Well,' she replied, 'you see my sister's taken this place at Hengler's; and she's got no hair herself worth speaking of, so I've given her mine—just to help her to make a more presentable appearance.'

Many years ago, a novelty was offered to the wonder-loving public in the shape of a so-called 'Man-monkey.' The name is misleading; for instead of this specimen being a monkey having some resemblance to a man, it was, on the contrary, a man endowed with the activity and nimbleness of a monkey, and in addition, imitating the tricks and peculiarities of our poor relative. The remarkable agility he displayed in running up poles, &c., and leaping about from point to point, as a monkey does in his cage, was in itself a sight worth seeing. As years rolled by, Martini dropped the 'monkey,' and ultimately became an equestrian agent, or middle-man between proprietor and performers. At the present time, these agents are plentiful enough; but Martini had it almost all to himself, and thrived accordingly. Notwithstanding this, he was a man of unpretending appearance and extremely simple habits. His 'office' was 'situated' at the front of the bar of the *Pheasant* public-house in Standgate, near to the Westminster Bridge Road, in which immediate neighbourhood equestrian and other artistes were thickly congregated. Here then, at the bar of the *Pheasant*, he transacted all his business, engaging men for masters, and finding masters for men; his contracts when signed, sealed, and delivered being usually celebrated in a drink. The question being asked in some form or other: 'What would he take to drink?' 'What did he fancy?' or, 'What was it to be?' one stereotyped answer invariably came from Martini: 'Two without.' And these two-penny nips of gin, which came pretty frequently during the day, with an occasional nibble of plain dry bread, constituted for several years the whole of this man's aliment. Nothing else would he touch. Once indeed, when he was complaining of feeling weak and ill, I took him to task on the score of his diet, and told him that he ought to take more nourishing food. I persuaded him to come along with me and have some oysters. He ate one or two; and it happened that a few days

afterwards he was taken seriously ill, and that this illness, from which he never recovered, terminated in his death. The poor fellow repeatedly assured the people about him that his illness had been caused by eating those few oysters; they had been far too nourishing for him, and more than his system would stand!

A peculiar circumstance occurred to me once while I was at Cheltenham. It was Whitsuntide, and I had organised a grand fete with special attractions, to take place in a cricket-field just outside the town. The chief feature of the day was to be the roasting of a bullock whole, in which I had had considerable previous experience. I therefore prepared drawings of the necessary structure, and gave full instructions to the caterer how he was to proceed. But after waiting some time, I found that no one had begun to construct the fireplace; so I determined to start the men at the work myself. Calling to one of them to bring a pickaxe, I pointed to the spot where he was to begin.

'Now drive your pick in just there,' I said, 'and loosen the earth a bit.'

Down went the pick into the loose soil; up came the lumps of earth, and with them what looked like some pieces of old iron, corroded with age, and with the earth firmly adhering to their surface. There were three or four at this first pick, and the man put down his tool to examine them.

'Never mind them!' I cried impatiently; 'for goodness' sake, get on with the work.'

As the man proceeded, more of the same articles were unearthed, until at last a dozen in all were discovered, and thrown aside to be examined afterwards. But Percy, one of the caterer's men, happening to come by at the moment, picked them up and examined them; afterwards offering the workman half-a-crown for the lot. This the man accepted; and Percy took the articles, whatever they were, away with him. I thought no more of the incident until a day or two afterwards, when a couple of policemen called upon me and began questioning me in a most mysterious manner about some treasure-trove that had been discovered in the cricket-field by some men who were working with me. I replied that I knew nothing about any treasure-trove. I knew some bits of old iron had been turned up, and that was all. Where they were then or who had got them, I neither knew nor cared. I suppose that as far as the police were concerned, the matter dropped. But I heard afterwards that these dozen pieces of 'old iron' turned out to be what are known to collectors of curiosities as 'apostle spoons.' They were of solid silver; and each had upon it, as a continuation or elongation of the handle, an upright figure of an apostle—the twelve spoons together furnishing the twelve apostles. They were decidedly cheap at half-a-crown the lot.

Driving with my man along a rather unfrequented road from Warrington to Lymm in Lancashire, I observed at a little distance ahead a group of women collected in the road, up and down which they appeared to be casting anxious glances. Presently, they appeared to have espied us, and were pointing in an excited manner towards us. Then they beckoned wildly with their naked arms—and such arms!—to other groups of women

standing about, who immediately rushed to the spot. It may appear that I am a coward, if I confess that I was somewhat alarmed. I knew what Lancashire women were; that if they got a notion into their head, nothing but superior force would turn them from their purpose; that if—to suppose a case—these women had imagined, through mistaken identity or false information, that I had in some way injured them, they would have horsewhipped or duck-pounded or killed me first, and inquired into the merits of the case afterwards. But coward or not, I drove on towards them, slackening my pace as I approached the group, but shewing no signs of an intention to stop. The women put up their hands, beckoning me to pull up; two of them rushed to the horse's head and seized the reins; and then we found ourselves surrounded by a gesticulating and jabbering mob of bare-headed, bare-armed, wooden-shod Amazons, their faces betokening an immense amount of excitement, but nothing worse.

'Well, my good women,' I exclaimed as calmly as I could, 'what do you want? what can I do for you?'

They all answered together, as I should judge from the clamour of tongues; but they all replied to the same effect, in their broad Lancashire dialect: 'We want you to give us something that's good for whooping-cough.'

What a strange request! I replied that I supposed they mistook me for a doctor. I was very sorry, but I could not help them, or I would.

'Oh, but you must!' they all sang out, with an emphasis that quite unnerved me.

'Well, but I can't!' I replied with equal vigour.

This parleying went on, until my man quietly said to me: 'Write 'em something down; it'll most likely satisfy them; anything will do.'

I adopted his suggestion, determined to be a doctor for once in my life, even if only a quack. Alighting from my trap, I repaired with the entire army to a little roadside inn a few yards away, and called for pen, ink, and paper. I then wrote down a kind of prescription, directing that eighteen grains of rhubarb were to be made into four pills and administered to the sufferer.

The poor ignorant creatures were as delighted at my action as I was perplexed at theirs. They thanked me, invited me to 'have a drink,' and were in every way as pressingly hospitable, as they had before been apparently hostile. They accompanied me back to my trap, and wished me God-speed as I drove away. Still wondering at this strange adventure, I arrived at the hotel at Lymm, and narrated the whole affair to the landlord, who at once furnished me with an explanation. He had seen me drive up to the door with my piebald horse, and through that, was ready with the interpretation. There was in those parts, he informed me, a superstition that if a traveller were met driving a piebald or skewbald horse, and were asked to give or recommend something that was good for the whooping-cough, whatever he gave or recommended would be an unfailing remedy for all the children round about that were suffering from that complaint. Such is the belief indeed of these simple folks up to the present day.

Whilst staying at an hotel in the Eastern

Counties, I made the passing acquaintance of a commercial traveller—an important man in his own conceit, and familiarly known as 'Sir Roger de Coverley.' Respecting this individual, some quaint stories were afterwards told me, which I might have felt justified in putting down as mere gossip, had not their probability been amply proved to me by the manner of the good gentleman himself during my short stay in his company. He was a persistent and systematic bragger—not confining himself to generalities, or speaking of bygone matters, where refutation of his assertions might be difficult, if not impossible; but boasting openly, and to any one who chose to listen to him, of all such matters as would tend to increase his importance in the eyes of others; making statements without reference to their truth, or to the possibility of his lies being found out. Say, for instance, that the conversation turned upon pictures. 'Ah,' quoth Sir Roger, 'if you want to know what a private collection ought to be like, you should see my gallery. Finest specimens of the Old Masters, and the leading men of the modern schools. Cost me thousands of pounds; and I could have ten times what I gave for some of the pictures. Why, only the other day Agnew offered me five hundred pounds for a little bit of Turner's that cost me only thirty-five guineas;' &c. Or it might chance that wines formed the subject of discussion, and then there was more big talk about his 'cellars' and 'choice vintages' and 'rare wines worth three guineas a bottle,' and sundry other trifles. When at a good distance from his house—which was at Bradford—he would put a clencher to his boastings by inviting some stranger, whom he had previously ascertained by artful questions to be quite sure not to accept the invitation, to come and see his pictures and taste his wines. On one of these occasions, a gentleman thus invited repeated the polite promise that so many others had given, that if he should chance to be in Bradford, he would do himself the pleasure of looking in. Time went by; the gentleman happened to be in Bradford, and he 'did himself the pleasure' of hunting up the address given him. After some inquiries, he was referred to one of a row of small houses in a very second-rate suburban street, which, however, turned out to be the right place. Mr Blank was not at home, but his wife was; and when her visitor informed her that he had been invited by her husband to call and inspect his picture-gallery, the good woman exclaimed: 'Picture-gallery! Lor' bless you, sir, we've got nothing but a few prints hung up in the parlour!'

These and other tales respecting this individual were told me after I had met him. On the evening in question, there was no one in the room but 'Sir Roger,' a dissenting minister, and myself. The usual dose of brag respecting his own affairs having been administered to us, he then proceeded to learn all about his two companions. (I must mention here, by way of parenthesis, that this happened at a time when, owing to successive failures of the grape-crops in France, French brandies had risen considerably.) Having told him as much of my business as I thought proper, the inquisitive fellow turned to the minister with the question: 'And what line might you be in, sir?'

The gentleman replied with a quiet smile: 'Oh, I am in the spiritual line.'

'You don't say so!' answered the loquacious man; adding in a sympathetic tone of voice: 'What a confounded price brandy has gone up to!'

AN INDIAN STORY.

I WILL give it in almost the same words my friend W—, an officer of the Indian army, told it.

'Very many years ago,' said he, 'I was ordered from Secunderabad in the Deccan, to Kamptee in the Central Provinces of India. Those were not the days of railway travelling. No Nizam's State and Great Indian Peninsular lines took you from near your very door in the former place to within a few miles' drive of the latter; but palanquins with bearers, or—when anything like decent roads permitted—bullock-carriages, were, as you know, the means of transit; and it goes also without saying that, barring a skin-and-bone fowl or a piece of goaty mutton, a handful of coarse rice, or the commonest of bazaar curry-stuff obtainable for food at most of the dak bungalows, every eatable and drinkable for the journey had to be carried. And above all things water, or—as more portable and refreshing—soda-water, for in the impure element of the wells, tanks, and streams by the way, cholera probably lurked in every drop. On that same soda-water hangs my tale.

'Fully provisioned, and with a large supply of the aforesaid aerated drink, my wife, one little daughter, and I, with of course a large retinue of servants, started upon our long but by no means unpleasant march; for what with going through villages and old tumbling-to-pieces, mud-walled strongholds—what with skirting grassy plains and fields of cotton, rice, and other grain—and what with traversing strips of jungle and belts of forests—in which my gun often got us an addition to tiffin or dinner—the route was neither unpicturesque nor monotonous. Then besides, we were always meeting or passing a somebody or other along it; horsemen or footmen all armed to the teeth with long matchlocks or spears, tulwars, daggers, and pistols; and each and every one having his head and jaws thickly bound up with cloths, as if either chronically affected with neuralgia, or suffering from the very worst of toothache. Now and again too, a closed *palkee* (palanquin), contents invisible, but presumed by my wife to be concealing from masculine gaze the *belle*—save the mark!—of a harem; a native swell on his elephant or Arab charger would, so to speak, hustle and jostle us; and many times a day a gang of male and female *bringarees*—the ubiquitous carriers of that part of India—would block the road with their well-laden bullocks and asses. Yes; it was a diversified and attractive but rather fever-stricken beaten track, that old north one by the Neermul jungle.

'Well, early one morning my cavalcade arrived at a large river, name forgotten, and called a halt for *chota hawree* (little breakfast). A venerable man with a long white beard, and really of prepossessing appearance, was squatted under a tree on the bank reading, or rather chanting aloud; and presently seeing my child busied with some biscuits or what not, came up to me, and salaaming politely, asked—in Hindustani of course—"Would the Burrah Sahib permit the little Miss to add a newly made *chupatty* [flour-cake] to her meal?"

"With thanks," replied the Burrah Sahib; that is, I myself.

"Good!" said he. "I will fetch them from my hut close by;" and soon the cakes appeared on a fresh green plantain leaf.

"The child munched and munched, became thirsty, and called for beverage; but neither milk, nor tea, nor coffee was just then available.

"Boy!" I sung out to one of my servants, "bring *Belahetee Pawnee*?" (Written as pronounced.) Anglice and literally, Europe-water, but generally used to designate soda-water.

'A bottle was brought, the wire removed; out flew the cork with the loudest of "bangs." The much bubbling fluid was soon fizzing from the mouth of the flask itself, and trickling into that of the child. The native gentleman stared and stared, and looked flabbergasted. Clearly, *Belahetee Pawnee* was to him a startling novelty—never dreamt of in his philosophy.

"God is great!" said he, after an astonished pause; "and this is most wonderful, that you Englishmen should feed a child so small and delicate as that on water, boiling up and as strong as gunpowder."

"Boiling! gunpowder! what do?"—

But before I had time to continue my intended query, he broke in: "Yes, Sah'b! Did not my ears hear a report as loud as a jingall? Did not my eyes see a cork driven with the force of a shot from the mouth of that glass vessel? Did they not observe as well, a sort of thin smoke issue at the same moment, and the water—if water it be—rushing out, and spurting as if it boiled? Behold! even now, that which the little girl has not drunk is yet gurgling and murmuring. It is indeed most marvellous!"

'I saw that my friend was nonplussed; and unfair as I own it was to impose upon his ignorance and credulity, the idea of ice, which of course he could never have met with in his burning-hot, out-of-the-way habitat, crossed my mind, and I could not resist the opportunity of puzzling him still more. "Indeed," I said, "it is wonderful and marvellous what we can do with this *Belahetee Pawnee* of ours. We can if we choose walk upon it, run with iron shoes upon it, ride or drive upon it. We can light fires upon it, roast oxen or sheep upon it. We can take it liquid, as you have seen, about with us; and nature or our art can make it solid—as I could shew you in Bombay or Madras—and then too we can also pack it up and carry it from place to place. Ask Lazarus there, if what I am saying is not correct."

'Lazarus, my *khlmitghar*, who has been listening to and appreciating "Master's" talk, corroborates every word, and puts in a little chaff on his own account. "The Colonel Sah'b speaks well, my father," says he; "and when I went with him across the big waters, I saw in his country more than all he has told you. But also in this our own land have I myself done thus. I have gone on many occasions to the bazaar, bought *seers* upon *seers* [pounds] of hard Europe-water, which I have wrapped up in a *cumlie* [blanket], and carried in a wicker-basket; and when I arrived at the bungalow, little or none of it had gone. Then I have taken a hammer or a stone, and with a knife or chopper, beaten the big piece into little bits, which the Sah'bs have eaten."

"God is indeed great!" once more exclaims the

astonished old man. "And now I marvel not—as I have marvelled hitherto—how it has come to pass that the Feringhee has conquered us warlike people, and possessed so much of Hindustan. If he can, as you say—and indeed as I have just seen he does make water his slave and obey him, even to the extent of exploding with the noise and the strength of gunpowder—how could we withstand him? No indeed! I know now that in the *Belahetee Pawnee* rests the might and the success of the Feringhee. Give me, I pray you, what yet remains of it in the bottle, and the bottle itself, that I may shew and tell of its power."

"He got them of course; and no doubt recounted to his friends, in village conclave assembled, all that he had witnessed and heard; but I am very much afraid that practically he was unable to demonstrate the gunpowder-like noise and force he talked of with the stale, flat, and unprofitable *Belahetee Pawnee* he took away with him."

WIRE TRAMWAYS.

In our recent article on 'Tramways' (May 1, 1880) it was stated that the working expenses of Hodgson's remarkable wire tramways are too heavy to yield an adequate return. This, we are glad to learn on the best authority, only applied to the early days of the operations. The patent, and the system to which it relates, now belong to a joint-stock Company, of which Mr W. T. H. Carrington is the Engineer and Manager. We have been favoured by Mr Carrington with some interesting details concerning the various ways in which the system is employed.

In mining countries abroad, wire tramways are found very advantageous in conveying minerals and ores from mines situated high up the slopes of mountains down to a valley, river, or seaport; and in conveying workmen and stores of all kinds in the reverse direction. One such line is at Lebu in Chili, where the suspended wire spans no less a sweep than seven hundred and thirty feet. Another is at the Somorrostro Iron Ore Mines near Bilbao in Spain. A third is at Nanaimo, in British Columbia; coal is carried down from a considerable elevation on a mountain-side to a seaport, a distance of over three miles; some of the posts that support the wire being no less than eighty feet high. At the Mayo Salt Mines, in the Punjab, is a wire tramway ten miles in length, which conveys salt not only down to but across the wide river Jhelum.

Some of the mines in this country are similarly provided; but more generally useful, perhaps, are those lines of short length which connect the different departments of factories and mills when too widely separated to allow of bridging, and when the intermediate space or spaces are occupied by lower buildings, streams, roads, &c. In many such cases the transport of goods becomes a matter of considerable expense, entailing as it does the lowering of the commodities from the higher stories of the works to the ground, their removal by a circuitous road, and ultimately their elevation to a higher level. Here the wire tramway becomes at once useful; especially when steam-power to work the wire can easily be obtained from the shafting of the general steam-machinery of the establishment. The system has in this way been adopted in Messrs Worrall's dye-works at

Salford; in Messrs Ashton's print-works at Hyde, to connect the bleaching department with the calico and muslin printing department, and passing over several large reservoirs at a height of thirty feet; in Messrs Knowles's print-works near Bury, where the wire tramway, starting at an upper floor of one factory, passes across meadows, over a river and a large reservoir, and ends on the ground-floor level of another factory belonging to the same firm; in the manure-works of Messrs Adams at the Victoria Docks, to facilitate the removal of manure during various stages of preparation from mixing-rooms to cooling-floors; in the extensive chemical works of Messrs Pattinson at Newcastle-on-Tyne, to carry the refuse from the furnaces and retorts over intervening sheds, workshops, and a street to the banks of the river, where it is shot into barges. Similar wire tramways have been established at Messrs Butterworth's mills near Rochdale, the Linoleum Company's works at Staines, Messrs Norton's works near Huddersfield, Messrs Harrison's brick-works at Otley, the Marquis of Bute's near Cardiff, Messrs Ensor's fire-clay works at Gresley, &c.

The carriage of field and farm produce offers another opening for the use of wire tramways. In Mauritius they are employed to convey sugar-cane from the fields where it grows to the sugar-mills for crushing. In Jamaica, the wires bring down, at an incline of one to three, cane that grows near hill-tops to mills situated in the valleys beneath. In Martinique and St Kitt's the same plan is adopted, delivering the cane in uniform quantities on the carriers, and in some instances carrying the plucked canes right over another field in which sugar is growing. In many countries wire tramways are employed for carrying the crops from large beetroot farms to a railway or a port of shipment. The Netherlands Land Inclosure Company uses one of them to convey farm-produce from their estate reclaimed from the sea.

This system is also ingeniously employed for the construction of a kind of pier-head. Ships sometimes are prevented by the shallowness of the water from coming near the shore. In such a case, ten or a dozen piles are driven into the bed of the sea at a suitable spot; and minerals are raised at that spot from vessels or lighters to the level of a wire tramway running thence to the shore.

ANECDOTES OF ENGLISH RURAL LIFE.

BY AN ENGLISH CLERGYMAN.

FIRST PAPER.

THERE are villages in the Dales and elsewhere in the north of England whose inhabitants are remarkable for the untutored character of their minds and the simplicity of their lives. Mostly excluded from the busy walks of life, seldom seeing any but their own neighbours, and reading little besides the Bible and a few elementary religious books, they are as different from their like in towns and cities as can be. For the most part they are a quiet, orderly, and industrious class of people, enjoying every essential of life with many of its comforts. And not being exposed to temptations such as are common to those who live in more populous places, few are given to intemperance, or to the frivolities and pleasures which characterise the latter.

My object in writing this paper is to illustrate certain phases of life peculiar to these northern rural districts. No one can long mingle with his country brethren without seeing that, while they are generally given to the love of money, they are remarkable for hospitality and neighbourly kindness. It is not uncommon to find many tillers of the soil so fond of hard cash as to feel it a hardship to part with sixpence for almost any kind of benevolent enterprise; yet they begrudge not a hearty meal to any who may call; and I have seen the tables of such groan beneath the good things of this life, to the best and most of which you were made heartily welcome. And at any hour of the day or of the night, they or theirs were ever ready to give a helping hand in any work either of need or mercy that might present itself.

Though not deficient in good sense, yet their ignorance of the ways of the world, especially of the tricks which are often played on the unwary, exposes them to the artful ways of the designing. A woman in one of the many obscure villages in the northern Dales had the misfortune to lose her husband by death; but she was consoled by being told by her minister that he had gone to be better off in Paradise, where in time she would rejoin him. Now, it is well known that in the coal-mining districts of Durham and Northumberland fine names are at times given to some newly formed settlements. One such was designated 'Paradise.' Well, it happened that a hawker of some kind, living in that village, found his way in his peregrinations to this poor woman's house, where he offered his wares for sale. While conversing with this man, the widow got to know that he came from Paradise, which was his home. 'Why,' said she, starting to her feet and looking earnestly at her visitor, 'that's where ma good man hes gone ta live: happen ye know him?'

Now, whether the hawker saw a chance of enriching himself at the poor body's expense, or that he was leading her on, at first for the fun of the thing, I know not; but true it is that he told her that he saw her husband when he entered the village; 'and,' said he in reply to her eager inquiries, 'he was well and all but happy when I left; but if I could take him a little of something, he would be perfectly content with his lot.'

The consequence of this was that the hawker left the poor woman's cottage considerably richer in money and in apparel than when he entered it; she actually believing that what she gave the man would find its way to her husband and heighten his happiness. This may not be credited by many; but the incident really occurred not over thirty years since. I believe, however, that the hawker was made to disgorge most of his spoil, the police having heard of the case.

I was well acquainted with a woman, the wife of a farmer, who resided in an obscure hamlet amongst the hills. She had lived till beyond mature life before she married, and had saved during her life of domestic servitude nearly two hundred pounds. Most of this sum she had out at interest when she married. One day a female gipsy entered her house in her husband's absence, and telling her that a fortune had been left her years ago by a relative, and that the money was then

in the national funds, only awaiting certain acts which she (the gipsy) could easily perform in order that it might become hers, an arrangement was entered into at once for the getting of the fortune, one requirement, however, being absolute secrecy. Acting on the vixen's instructions, the woman called in one hundred pounds of her investments, and had the money in 'golden sovereigns' when the gipsy called again.

'Now,' said the hag, 'this money must be put into a *blue* stocking; it must be tied up, and hung on a nail in the kitchen here, and there it must remain for fourteen days, when I will call again, and the fortune will be yours.'

A blue stocking was fetched; the money was put therein, and it—or rather another stocking of the like colour, brought in the gipsy's basket, and dexterously exchanged for the other—was hung up as described; and away went the gipsy. That same night the tents of the Bohemians were struck, to be planted fifty or more miles away. Need I say that when the stocking was taken down, instead of revealing the hundred gold sovereigns, a number of round pieces of lead appalled the gaze of the deluded one!

The following incident will illustrate the shrewdness and ready resource of these simple-minded Dalers. In a village in one of the Dales a kind-hearted but somewhat hot-headed woman resided, who entertained the minister when he came to preach there. On the occasion of the first visit of one of this fraternity, she deemed it necessary to ascertain his preference for tea or coffee for breakfast; so as she was going on with the preparation of the meal, she went to the stair-foot and called out the name of her guest. But no answer was vouchsafed her call. Wonderingly, she waited a while, and then, repeating her call, she was answered by, 'What do you want?' in anything but a gentle tone of voice.

'I want to know whether you'll have tea or coffee to your breakfast.'

'I'll have either, or both,' was the odd and stinging reply.

'You've got out on the wrong side o' the bed ta morn,' said the irritated dame to herself; 'but I'll fit up yer order, my man;' so saying, she went to the cupboard, took thence another teapot, and putting therein equal quantities of tea and coffee, she made a strong decoction thereof for the preacher. Presently, he felt that he had a strangely flavoured beverage before him; so, pausing, he asked: 'What's this, Missis?'

'It is *both*, sir; and you sall either sup it or gang without.'

Some young men are possessed of a shrewdness not expected in them when judged by their appearance. The writer was once on a journey among the Dales. The morning was frosty. As he went along a highway, he was overtaken by a big, burly, half-witted looking lad on the back of a pony, which was fearfully affected in its lungs, as its loud wheezing testified.

'Your pony is short of breath, my lad, this morning,' said the writer.

'Duv yo think soa? Naa; aw think it's gotten ower mitch, an' can't git shut on't.'

And away trotted the pony, with its philosophic rider, leaving the writer to his reflections.

In these villages, Methodist 'revivals' are common. A young farm-servant had been 'brought in' in one of them, and in the heat of his enthusiasm was heard at times praying aloud in the barn. On one such occasion, a man stopped to listen. With vehemence the lad was saying: 'O Lord, send the devil aat ov aar village wi' twa hats.'

'What does the lad mean?' said the listener to himself.

The meaning at length became plain. It was the custom of farm-servants, when they left their places to return after a holiday, not to take with them more than the hat they wore; but when they left for good, the sign thereof was an extra hat in the hand. So the zeal of this young convert led him to ask that his Satanic Majesty might be sent away from among them, not to return—that is, that he might go 'with twa hats.'

A clergyman fond of pedestrian exercises was in the habit of strolling through the Dales almost daily in nearly all weathers, and of entering into conversation with any one whom he chanced to overtake, as, he said, 'I can get an idea from even a fool.'

'One day,' he said to the writer, 'I overtook a young fellow who was leading a wagon laden with manure. He was a real specimen of a Daler. After a few words of general conversation, I asked: "How much may you get for your job?" "Fower shillin' a-wick an' me shurt weshin," was the prompt reply. I was in the act of taking stock of the lad's garments, to see if a shirt was the only item of apparel that he might need to have washed weekly, when—looking me earnestly in the face—he said, with a coolness and a deliberation that was perfectly comical: "An' what may thou hev for thy job?"'

My friend did not say whether he enlightened his rustic companion; but it must be acknowledged that he had equal right to know the earnings of the parson.

An instance of an inventive genius in an illiterate farmer's boy is too good to be forgotten. A small farmer hired a youth to assist him in the work of his farm as an indoor servant. The first piece of work he was set to do was to thrash out some corn. As the farmer was passing the barn in which the youth was at work, he heard the flail lazily keeping time to a tune the lad was singing. Stopping to listen, he ascertained that the words were, 'Bread-and-cheese, tak' thy ease.'

Going into the house, the farmer said to his wife: 'This is a queer sort of lad we have gotten; he seems to think that the speed at which he ought to work should be measured by the kind of food he gets.' And then relating what he had heard, he suggested: 'Suppose we give him something different to dinner to-morrow, and see how that acts?'

This being agreed to, he had apple-pie added to his bread-and-cheese. This brought down his flail somewhat more rapidly, for it was going to the speed wherewith the lad sang 'Apple-pie accordin'-ly.'

'Bob's doing a bit better to-day, lass,' said the farmer to his wife; 'let us mend his dinner again to-morrow, and see what that will bring forth.'

So, when the next dinner-time came round, he

had a good plate of beef and pudding set before him, which went down right grandly, and brought the flail into splendid action to the words, 'Beef and puddin', I'll gi'e thee a drubbin', and to a jolly good tune.

'I see plainly,' said the farmer, 'if we wish to get good work out of Bob, we must feed him well;' so Bob had his bill of fare improved without having recourse to a strike.

In a village in a district crowded with inhabitants in the same latitude but in a different longitude from those hitherto spoken of, and wherein the introduction of manufactures has produced a change in the habits of the people, a friend of the writer's once spent a Sunday. He dined at a farmhouse on a hill-side where the good things of this life were both abundant and good. The after-dinner conversation between him and the heads of the household was interrupted by the ingress of a young woman, who began to rummage a chest of drawers in an impatient style. After a while, seeing that she did not find the object of her search, the mother asked aloud: 'What art ta lateing?' [seeking].

'I's lateing me shift,' was the girl's reply, snappishly.

'Ugh! tha's needn't late it ony langer,' said the mother, with perfect composure; 'for seein' nowt else, aw tuck th' lap on'ta boil t' puddin' in.'

'I could not refrain from laughing outright,' said my informant; 'and felt glad that the task of eating the pudding had already been an accomplished fact.'

Before the passing of the Ballot Act, an election often gave 'free and independent electors' no small amount of anxiety, especially if their landlord was of a different political creed from his tenants. But I knew an instance of another kind. A large estate in the district about which I write was owned by a peer of the realm, who seemed to guide his political action more by the candidates in the field than by principle; for the tenants did not know how they would have to vote until the steward made known his lordship's will. So these sixty or seventy possessors of the franchise never suffered electioneering excitements to come near them until the day of the poll, when, having received a circular the day previously to say 'that the Right Hon. Lord So-and-so wishes you to support Mr So-and-so, and his lordship will be pleased if you can arrange to go to the poll in a body,' they dressed in their best, and drove, with most serene and contented countenances, to the town in which the polling-booth was situated.

One man there was who farmed under two landlords of diverse political creeds. During my residence in the Dales, there chanced to be an election for the division in which this worthy lived. Walking out with him one morning just before the day of election, I asked him if he had made up his mind as to the giving of his vote.

'O yes,' was the reply; and then, without waiting for another question, he said: 'I got a papper first fra th' General axing me to vote yellow. Of coorse I said "I will." Th' next day there com' a papper fra Maister Green, my uther landlord, axing me to vote blue. "Of coorse I will," was my reply.'

'What! do you mean to vote both ways, Mr Claypole?'

'Sure-ly,' was the prompt reply; and then he added: 'Dun yo think as I would vex owther o' my landlords for the sake o' politics? Noa, noa; not soa. I knaws better nor that. I've written 'em boath to say, "I'll do as ye desire me;" so nowther on 'em can say as I've gone contrairy to his wishes.'

This Mr Claypole was proverbial for his avarice, though he kept a capital table; but then most of what was served thereon was grown on his farms. It was therefore not a little surprising to the writer when the old gentleman said to him one day, as they were slowly walking through one of his fields: 'I breeds about fower dozen geese ivery year; but I doesn't sell yan; I either eats or gies 'em all away.' Seeing that my look was an incredulous one, he promptly added: 'But mind! aw taks varry good care wherea aw gies 'em;' then looking me steadily and earnestly in the face, he said, with perfect *sang-froid*, compressing his lips and nodding at the close of the utterance: 'Aw gies a goois wherea aw believes aw sall git a turkey.'

'Exactly!' was my response.

The writer happened to be present at a preaching service which was held in Claypole's kitchen one work-day evening. His better-half was an earnest member of a Methodist body, and was vastly more liberal than her husband, who, however, kept her bare of money, so that it was with much difficulty that she could keep up her subscriptions to the 'cause.' There was to be a collection on this occasion, and it had been a subject of contention beforehand how much each of them should give. Claypole said he would not give more than a few coppers; but Mrs Claypole said she would give a shilling, 'that she would,' which she had managed to save somehow. 'You mun dew nowt ov th' kind,' was the imperious order of her liege lord. As the collector neared the person of Mrs Claypole, the old man's eyes were fixed upon her with a steady and earnest gaze, believing that he would thereby frighten her into compliance with his wish. Mrs Claypole saw the movement and quailed beneath the stare. But waxing bold as the crisis came near, she clutched the shilling between her thumb and forefinger, and holding it up before his steady forbidding look, she said, loud enough for all to hear: 'It's ganjin', see thee!' and down it dropped into the hat that did service as a collecting-box. I need not add that the poor woman had a bad time of it that night.

Upon the whole, there is much to reconcile one to a residence in these out-of-the-way places. The people generally are clean both in their persons and houses, and there is a solid comfort which cannot be found so prevalent among their kind in large places; and their kindness endears them to us. Their simplicity and credulity may now and again bring upon them certain pains and penalties, but for the most part they only result in harmless mirth. The iron-road is beginning to penetrate these regions, and this will ere long be the means of greatly altering the character of the people; for when able to mingle with persons of a different mental calibre, and of being made familiar with the vigour and acuteness of their more instructed brethren, they themselves will be inoculated with

similar influences, and thus become incapable of declaring, as did an old lady when taken for the first time to the top of a neighbouring hill: 'Hay! I didna think th' world wor soa big!'

ON THE EVE OF THE WEDDING.

O LOVE, before we part to-night,
Before the last 'I will' is spoken—
Before the ring has touched my hand,
Of pure, true, endless love the token—
Before the Church with holy rite,
Her blessing on our love has given,
Look straight into my eyes with yours,
And answer me in sight of Heaven.

Is there within your heart of hearts
One lingering shadow of regret—
One thought that you have chosen ill?
Oh! speak—'tis not too late even yet.
Is there in all this world of ours,
One you have ever known or seen,
Whom, if you had earlier seen or known,
You would have crowned your chosen queen?

Is there?—I pray you, tell me now,
And I will hold you bound no more.
I will not flinch to hear the truth.
It could not be so sad, so sore,
To know it now, as it would be
If by-and-by a shadow fell
Upon the sunshine of our home;
So, if you ever loved me—tell.

I'd hold you pure from blame, dear love;
And I would leave you free as air,
To woo and win that happier one.
All this for your dear sake, I'd bear.
I will not say how I would pray
That God might have you in His care;
That would be easy—when I think
Of you, my heart is all one prayer.

But could I join her name with yours,
And call down blessings from above
On her, who had robbed me of my all—
My life—my light—my only love?
Yes! even that I'd try to do;
Although my lonely heart should break,
I'd try to say 'God bless her!' too,
Through blinding tears, for your sweet sake.

I'm looking up into your eyes;
But though my own with tears are dim,
I read that in their true, clear depths,
Which tells me, 'You may trust in him.'
I will—I will! It needs no words,
Though yours are flowing warm and fast,
And eloquent with truth and love.
Forgive my doubts—they are the last!

BESSY FRANKS.

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